DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 325 471 SP 032 716

AUTHOR Stones, Edgar
TITLE Collegial Appraisal for the Enhancement of Pupil Learning.
PUB DATE 86
NOTE 16p.; Paper presented at a Conference of the British Educational Research Association on "Appraising Appraisal" (1966).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *College School Cooperation; Collegiality; Concept Teaching; Curriculum Enrichment; Educational Objectives; Elementary Secondary Education; *Evaluation Criteria; Higher Education; *Instructional Effectiveness; Learning Processes; *Peer Evaluation; Problem Solving; Teaching Methods

ABSTRACT

It is argued that current views of teaching as delivering curriculum underestimate the nature of teaching and imply simplistic views of human learning. The current vogue for teacher appraisal, which stresses a managerial approach, assumes that teaching is relatively easily quantified and measured, and it overlooks the value-laden nature of views on teaching. An alternative approach to appraisal stresses collegiality, focusing on complex human learning, particularly problem solving. Because teaching is a complex, value-laden, and theoretically based activity, appraisal should be collegial, with teachers cooperating in mutual pedegogical development. Appraisal should not be managerial and imposed from outside. An approach with practicing teachers working along these lines with a university school of education is described and analyzed. (Author/JD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED325471

COLLEGIAL APPRAISAL FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF PUPIL LEARNING

E STONES

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

E Stones

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as
received from the person or organization
originating it.

Minor changes have been made to improve
reproduction quality.

Points of view or opinions stated in this docu-
ment do not necessarily represent official
OERI position or policy.

SP 032 716

PAPER PRESENTED AT A CONFERENCE OF THE BRITISH EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATION ON 'APPRAISING APPRAISAL' 1986

ABSTRACT

Collegial appraisal for the enhancement of pupil learning

Current views of teaching as 'delivering the curriculum' are examined and found wanting. It is argued that these views grossly underestimate the nature of teaching and imply simplistic views of human learning. The current vogue for teacher appraisal adopts these simplistic views and stresses a managerial approach. This approach, itself, oversimplifies and assumes that teaching is relatively easily quantified and measured. The value laden nature of views on teaching is overlooked.

These approaches to teacher appraisal compound the error of focusing on the simplest type of human learning, rote learning, with the assumption that valid and non controversial methods of appraisal are easily reached.

An alternative approach to appraisal is advanced that stresses a collegial approach focusing on complex human learning particularly problem solving. Teaching should be conceived of as a complex, value laden and theoretically based activity. Appraisal should be based on this approach and collegial, with teachers cooperating in mutual pedagogical development rather that managerial and imposed from outside.

An approach with practising teachers working with a university school of education along these lines is described and analyzed.

COLLEGIAL APPRAISAL FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF PUPIL LEARNING

EDGAR STONES

Probably the fact that a group of members of the educational research and development community felt it necessary to mount this conference, points to a serious problem within teaching. I refer to the dearth of critical appraisal of fashionable educational nostrums. Scarcely a week has passed during the last year without a conference or seminar on the subject of appraisal. By and large the conferences which have been held have taken the notions adumbrated in *Teaching Quality* as the point of departure. That is the problem. With few exceptions there has been little critical examination of the conceptions of teaching, pedagogy, and testing underlying the calls for appraisal, and remarkably little consideration of the large volume of research already available about the difficulties of reaching consensus about what constitutes good teaching. Instead we have seen a series of exegeses of the original text.

The reasons for the apparent enthusiasm with which the pronouncements about appraisal have been espoused are no doubt extremely complex and I do not presume to be able to disentangle those complexities. What I shall do is to draw attention to what seem to me to be the most central issues in those aspects of appraisal relating to practical teaching and pedagogy, with particular reference to in-service training and staff development.

Stand and deliver

I can think of no better place to start than with the DES's pronouncements at a previous conferences. The paper given at the Birmingham Conference will serve as a representative sample. (DES 1985) The first sentence reads: 'So important is high quality teaching to the *delivery* of a good quality education, that it would be impossible to run an effective school system without appraising the performance of teachers.' (my emphasis) And later: 'The current arrangements are not ideal but they *deliver*'.(my emphasis)

The notion of education as something to be delivered speaks volumes about the way some people conceive of teaching. I believe that the expression is not just a harmless bit of fashionable jargon to which I am over-reacting, it betokens genuinely held views of teaching that are serious obstacles to improvement. Further, I wish to argue that 'quality education' and 'delivery' are contradictory terms.

Although there has been much talk in these conferences of managerial action that might facilitate appraisal, there is little if any indication of what the process should entail concretely and specifically in educational terms. The paper by Taylor (1985) to the Birmingham conference went some way towards doing this. In his review of a body of research in the general field of classroom and teacher effectiveness he referred to some of the more well known variables that seem associated with success in teaching. He also argued that it was up to the profession to accept the responsibility for improvement 'where it really counts, in the school and the individual classroom'. In the same paper he quotes Perry's call for 'a more rigorous pedagogy' drawing on this research in inservice and pre-service training. I have no difficulty in associating myself with these remarks. However, for progress to be made towards improvement we need to be much clearer about how it might be done. Further, practically all the research in the field reports work on teaching *as it is now*. In America, where most of the research has taken place, this largely involves what they refer to as 'recitation', that is delivery teaching as, indeed, it does in this country. The argument in this paper will be that this kind of teaching is limited in that it is appropriate only to simple kinds of learning and I suggest that there is more hope for progress if teachers become involved in exploring the way teaching *ought to be* to produce more effective learning. The focus should be on teaching as it could be tomorrow, not as it was yesterday. In my remarks I shall try to make specific suggestions for facilitating professional self appraisal and developing a rigorous pedagogy that holds promise of being *systemic* within the profession and conducive to improvement.

The stereotypical view of teaching implied by the managerial approach to teaching is one adult confronting a group of young people, transmitting or, if you prefer, 'delivering' information to them. Appraisal of classroom teaching, it seems, is to comprise one or two periods of observation of this activity. In the words of the DES paper: 'Teaching in the classroom is the essence of the job. But it depends upon proper lesson preparation and effective marking to reinforce what is delivered in the classroom.' It goes on to ask how reliability and consistency are to be achieved. Other speakers today have commented on the difficulties of achieving reliability and rater consistency in classroom observation. But even if reliability and rater consistency were perfect the teaching observed could still be worthless if the much more important question of validity is ignored.

Validity is the extent to which teaching achieves the aims it intends. This apparently simple assertion encapsulates philosophical pedagogical and psychological phenomena of a level of complexity totally alien to the certitudes of managerial appraisal. In current discussions, these phenomena are by and large totally ignored. I do not know the reason for this neglect, but I suspect it is because they are little known and less understood. But by ignoring this aspect of appraisal and focussing on improving reliability and rater consistency because 'it's coming anyway and we have to "deliver"' is tantamount to saying 'never mind the ball, let's get on with the game'.

Values

In the material I have seen produced by recent conferences on appraisal, the question of values has received little, if any, attention. It often seems to be taken for granted that the values implicit in current directives on appraisal are universally held. This is by no means the case. I am sure that many educationists will find the characterisation of education as the delivery (of a product?) as deeply offensive. Nor will there be universal consensus for the view of schools as authoritarian institutions with staff subject to 'management' and 'deployment'. On the contrary, there is considerable support for a view of schools as collegial institutions with a collective commitment to cooperative appraisal for institutional and personal growth.

Desirable Learning

The fundamental problem with delivery teaching is that it traps the learner in the least useful type of learning. At worst it could be of the type of meaningless recitation that flourished in the time of payment by results. At best it can achieve no more than a modest expansion of existing concepts, that is, the existing body of ideas one has about phenomena. This is because conceptual or meaningful learning depends in the last analysis on direct personal experience. Analogues of direct personal experience can help as in the case of skilfully used AVA. But words themselves used in delivery teaching, unless they spring from an existing body of related knowledge, can be of little help since their connection with the meanings the teachers are trying to develop in pupils is arbitrary. It is stimulus-response learning akin to paired associate learning in psychology where nonsense syllables form the stimulus and arbitrary actions the response. Vygotsky referred to this type of learning as language covering a conceptual vacuum.

To illustrate my point let me refer to my first encounter with one group of graduates starting teacher training. I had asked them all to come prepared to explain briefly how they would set about teaching something to someone. They had a completely free choice. The first exposition typifies the general character of the contributions. The student teacher was aiming to teach the pupils how to locate a place in an atlas using the index. His prescription was that he would first tell them this, then he would tell them that, then the other. End of lesson. For this student there was no problem other than deciding what to tell them. It is perhaps a caricature of the delivery mode of teaching but an all too common one as the students knew from their experiences as pupils in school and as undergraduates.

How would the approach I espouse differ from this? Briefly it sees the lesson as a learning and teaching problem that it is necessary to analyse to ascertain the nature of the task, to get clarity about objectives, and to determine explicity the beginning competence of the pupils and the end competence aspired to. None of this is new, but it is honoured more in the breach than the observance. The next point is particularly neglected but crucial: we do have information from psychology and skill training that can be helpful in getting pupils from a state of naivety to a state of mastery and we should call on this information whenever possible.

Specifically one would draw attention to questions such as the assumptions being made about entry competence of the pupils. Are they able to use an index? Are they familiar with the use of co-ordinates? Is the teacher clear about the way in which learning is to be evaluated? Is it to be by asking the pupils questions? Should these be written or oral? Or are the pupils to be asked to locate places in that or other atlases? If the pupils are already able to use an index and co-ordinates, all that is necessary is to ask them to apply the two existing skills to a new situation. If they have neither skill, then the important question arises: is it more appropriate to teach the pupils the two skills in this very specific context to solve this very specific problem, or would it be better to teach them the skills for general application? If the latter, then the proposed lesson is called into question. A lesson aiming to teach general skills would take the using of an index in an atlas as just one exemplar in the teaching of the general principles of index usage and the use of co-ordinates to locate places in an atlas would be just one exemplar in teaching the principles of the use of co-ordinates. Knowledge of concept learning would be of great help to the teacher in both these tasks and would help to ensure that the pupils acquired skills of general application so that a lesson solely on the use of an index in an atlas would be unnecessary, since all the pupils would have to do to find a place would be to deploy existing general skills.

I realise that many teachers may acquire knowledge that is conducive to concept learning by a process of incidental induction. However, the unsystematic acquisition of such knowledge is not satisfactory if improvement is the aim, and there is also the problem that some teachers will not acquire the knowledge. The results of this unsystematised teacher knowledge is to be found in the evidence that pupils' concepts frequently diverge considerably from those of the teacher, without the teacher's being aware of the divergence. Pupils and teacher use the same words but the meanings are quite different.

Teachers making use of a systematic theory-related approach to concept teaching consciously consider such things as the selection and programming of exemplars of concepts, methods of helping pupils discriminate between criterial and non-criterial attributes, and methods of encouraging the pupils' use of language to facilitate their learning. Instead of telling, they will consider such things as the best way of presenting specific exemplars of the concepts, how feedback should be provided, and how best to encourage pupils in their learning.

The crucial test to ascertain whether the pupils have learned the concepts and are, in fact, able to discriminate between examplars and non-exemplars, is to ask them to demonstrate in practice, not just to answer questions about the general nature of the concepts. By so doing teachers obtain evidence that indicates whether the pupils' grasp of concepts resembles their own as well as whether it is genuinely transferable.

Most current discussion is in sharp contrast with this approach to the assessment of pupil learning. There seems to be considerable pedagogical naivety in its assertion that what matters is pupil learning when it seems to be assumed that the assessment of learning is non-problematic. Simplistic views of the assessment of pupil learning compound simplistic views of the assessment of teacher competence. Together, I suggest, they provide a recipe,

not for improvement, but for stagnation.

I should like, now, briefly to draw attention to one or two matters that relate particularly to my argument about the nature of learning. A very serious problem in connection with examinations and testing in this country, has been the preoccupation with administrative and technical matters, and the neglect of pedagogy. As a consequence very many tests at all levels, including higher education, tap only relatively superficial skills. Any system of teacher appraisal using current methods of the assessment of learning as a criterion is a snare and a delusion. By and large, teachers are ill equipped to subject externally produced tests to critical scrutiny, or to devise their own methods of assessment that would test the transferable learning I am discussing. A system of appraisal that is equally ill informed might well approve of teachers who produced pupil learning that seemed satisfactory by tests of this type. In the process it would thereby conceal quite inadequate pupil learning that would be revealed if a different approach to the assessment of learning were used. A serious approach to the improvement of teaching would provide a rigorous training in pedagogy-based approaches to the assessment of learning at all levels of teacher education.

In the DES paper, reservations are expressed about using pupil learning in appraisal. The worry is that teachers might teach to the test. This reservation can only apply to the simple non-transferable learning I have mentioned. This is because learning from teaching by telling is by nature difficult to transfer to new situations. If it is assessed by asking pupils to reproduce what they have been told by the teacher, the teacher will never know the nature of the pupils' concepts since their answers will be entirely at the surface level. Teaching by telling places a premium on memorisation and its assessment. It is a tacit acceptance of that type of learning as staple and the focus for systems of appraisal. Teaching, drawing on pedagogical principles that foster conceptual learning, would produce transferable learning that is useful in novel situations. Any satisfactory test of that learning by definition would test complex understandings and transfer so that, even if it were possible, 'teaching to the test' would be more reason for satisfaction than cause for concern.

By the same token, a system of appraisal that takes the delivery model as a given and ignores the pedagogical concomitants necessary for complex pupil learning, encourages teachers to 'teach to the test' in a different sense. They could engage in the familiar activity of impression management to market themselves more effectively by improving their image. They might even buy one of the books now appearing that tell them how to succeed when they are appraised. Success in this scheme of things is measured by level of teacher's salary rather than pupils' growth. A system of appraisal, based on teacher activity using pedagogical principles to develop complex learning in pupils, would be very much less susceptible to such cosmetic operations and if teachers taught to that kind of test I think few of us would be concerned.

I should stress that the principles I am referring to, are of a different nature from such things as 'teaching style' or 'methods' of instruction since these deal with surface pedagogical

activities. It is of little import whether teachers are formal or informal, authoritarian or democratic, didactic or discovery orientated, since if they transgress all the canons of concept learning in their teaching they are bound to fail to teach for meaningful learning. (This does not preclude pupils from learning meaningfully at times, despite the teacher.)

Clearly what I am advocating is a theory based approach to teaching and teacher appraisal. It is sometimes suggested that our knowledge of theoretical principles relevant to teaching is not sufficiently developed to be useful to teachers. Yet there is a fairly substantial body of knowledge about human learning. What has been lacking is a systematic attempt to apply this knowledge to teaching. A benign system of appraisal should have, as an important element, the encouragement of teaching that self-consciously explores the links between the specific practical activity and the general underlying basic principles. In such a system appraisal of practical teaching focuses not on the specifics *for themselves*, but for the extent to which they embody the basic principles and the extent to which meaningful pupil learning takes place.

Teaching concepts is perhaps the basic pedagogical skill. In itself that is hard to do and hard to evaluate. But I suggest that the main value of teaching concepts is instrumental in that it is essential for the teaching of ways of learning to solve problems. This follows since to be able to solve problems in a particular field one needs to have an understanding of the main concepts in the field. There are also other psychological principles that could be drawn on in the teaching of problem solving skills which is one of the the most important pedagogical tasks. Similarly teachers could make use of knowledge of the psychology of skill learning in the development of physical skills such as drawing or the use of tools. And there is also useful knowledge about how to enhance pupil motivation.

For teachers to be able to make use of the knowledge about human learning it is important for them to be able to identify which type of learning is involved at any one time, since different types of learning demand different kinds of teaching. For example: acquiring vocabulary in foreign language teaching, which is essentially paired associate learning, involves a different type of learning from learning grammatical structures, which should involve learning of principles, so that different teaching approaches are indicated. Learners are likely to experience difficulty if a teacher teaches grammatical structures as paired associate learning, which is a likely consquence of delivery teaching. A systematic analysis of a particular teaching task will help teachers identify the nature of the teaching and learning involved and help avoid problems of this type. This procedure is commonly referred to as *task analysis*. Task analysis will also help the teacher in planning appropriate feedback that is vital for learning to take place and help to clarify the most appropriate means of assessing learning that emphasise transferability and eschew rote learning.

Clearly the assessment of teachers' competence in deploying skills of this nature demands considerable expertise by teacher and appraiser. All the research evidence from observation and analysis of teaching transactions agrees on one thing: that it is enormously complex. If to this complexity we add the need to identify and evaluate the type of pedagogical activities

taking place the task becomes very much more difficult.

I stress the need for the teacher as well as the appraiser to have the appropriate pedagogical expertise. Unless there is a shared understanding and agreement about the criteria of appraisal, there can be no meaningful dialogue between appraiser and appraised. Without a common discourse any discussion about the teaching observed will inevitably be confined to superficialities. If appraisal is intended for improvement, discourse of this nature will be fruitless. If it is intended merely to identify incompetence, appraisal with no shared understanding will rightly be seen as arbitrary by the teacher. A sentence in the DES paper bears on this point: '...it is difficult to conceive of this option (self-appraisal) being used other than for purposes of improvement.' Peer appraisal is also commented on to the effect that it 'seems best for use in improving teacher performance'. I do not know whether I am alone in thinking that I detect an implication that appraisal is for reasons other than improvement, not, of course, that it rules out improvement. Presumably the aim is to exclude the incompetent. What is not made explicit is the relative importance attached to the two objectives of improvement and exclusion. Whichever is accorded more importance, I suspect there is a belief that exclusion will lead to improvement. I believe there are other ways of looking at appraisal and that there is a logical flaw in the proposition that exclusion leads to improvement. I should now like to examine that proposition and the questions of self and peer appraisal and their relevance to our current concerns.

Exclusion or improvement?

The argument that the dismissal of a small number of incompetents will improve teaching quality exemplifies the classical English preoccupation with exclusion as a instrument of improvement. Even it were possible to agree that our techniques of appraisal are non-problematic and non-controversial, the negative act of exclusion would leave the rest of the teaching force virtually untouched unless positive action is also taken to improve their skills. The mere threat of two or three visits a year to teachers' classes can have no meaningful impact on the general level of teaching competence. Getting rid of the worst of a bad bunch still leaves a bad bunch, even if it is a bit smaller.

One does not have to imply that the bulk of teachers constitutes a bad bunch to suggest that there is room for general improvement, any more than it could be said of any other profession including civil servants and politicians. Few would argue that the existing general level of competence is satisfactory. Certainly HMI publications and pronouncements from DES give a contrary impression. Teachers, themselves, would also, in the main, agree and many provide evidence of this year after year by opting for staff development, not always in entirely cynical ploys for self advancement. Any system of appraisal that emphasises exclusion over general improvement is a system with no hope of progress.

On the other hand, a system of appraisal geared to improvement is a system with a commitment to raising the general level of teaching. If the general level can be raised, then the level of the least competent will also be raised, conceivably to a level above any previous

cut-off point for ascertaining competence. What then? Excluders would probably raise the cut-off point on the grounds that the incompetent are always with us. Improvers would be encouraged to continue their activities. It is all a question of one's attitude to the relative merits of criterion referenced and norm referenced testing. Since official opinion is currently smiling on criterion referencing, I suggest it should welcome appraisal for improvement and provide the resources to implement it.

I think that there is a great danger that current allocations of resources will be channelled towards the exclusion approach to appraisal at the expense of improvement. Experience of pre-service teacher appraisal leads me to believe that resources allocated to exclusion would be largely wasted. In a recent survey of success and failure rates in final teaching practice of teacher-trainees in institutions in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, we found that hardly any failed. (Stones and Webster 1984) Those who failed were able to recoup on a re-take. This is not because training courses are soft options, or because the staffs are too liberal. It is probably part consquence of the problematic features of appraisal that have been discussed in this and other papers, and of the fact that a fair number of trainee teachers leave college before completing the course for various reasons that emerge naturally during their courses, not the least being the personal feelings of the student towards teaching as a profession. Despite this fact, considerable resources are expended on arranging for the appraisal of student teachers. Since it is quite likely that similar types of wastage occur among in-service teachers I think it very important to avoid this problem in teacher appraisal generally. To spend valuable resources on the pursuit of a small number of alleged incompetents could well be seen as a diversion (or diversionary tactic) from the more important task of improving the general level.

Systemic Research and Development

Any meaningful improvement of the quality of teaching generally can only be brought about, as Taylor concluded, through the involvement of teachers themselves. I suggested, earlier, that to accomplish this involvement, effort and resources should be devoted to developing patterns of self-appraisal employing a rigorous pedagogy that are systemic. That is, they are built into the system as a natural and organic part of a teacher's profession. Here I take up the points made by Taylor and Perry and also the DES paper I referred to earlier. The latter explicitly calls for empirical study of the relationship between appraisal and the standards it is expected to raise. In my view this empirical study should also be systemic. In other words, teachers themselves should be involved in contributing to our understanding of pedagogy as well as, or as I would prefer it, in concert with researchers.

There is a strong body of opinion within the British Educational Research Association that would support the view that researchers and teachers should work together with the general aim of improving schools and teaching. Not with teachers as the subjects in research projects, but as partners in a shared enterprise. Research on teaching could add an important dimension to the nature of teaching itself by expanding the role of the teacher to encompass research activities aimed to improve teaching and thereby to improve our

understanding of teaching and learning. A view of educational research and development as an enterprise involving teachers as field workers and partners in applied pedagogical investigations, collaborating with advisors and the training institutions, bringing their own expertise and resources is an essential element in any realisation of systemic research and improvement.

My own view is that educational research itself needs this focus on practical teaching. Not to conduct more investigations into the *status quo* or the *status quo ante*, but to take an interventionist approached based on theories that hold promise of improvement of teaching and children's learning. Teachers and advisors are more likely to be seized by research projects such as these that touch their daily lives and are part of their professional work than by single shot investigations on funded research that are here today and gone tommorrow. Apart from the likely appeal to teachers, I also believe that outcome-oriented developmental research offers a greater challenge to researchers than the cross-sectional studies so frequently found. Crucially, however, it offers promise of a greater yield of knowledge about teaching and ways of improving it than other current methods.

The place of INSET

There are clearly very difficult problems in operationalising investigations of this type. Some are logistic. It is difficult for full-time teachers to find time and energy to enable them to do the necessary preliminary work to equip them to carry out the investigations, or to develop methods of incorporating the general approach in their teaching. Some, perhaps the most difficult, are conceptual and pedagogic, since most practising teachers have little knowledge of the psychology of pedagogy they need to implement the approach. I suggest, therefore, that the key to the implementation of systemic research-oriented teaching aimed at raising the general level of competence within the profession is in systematic staff development. The main onus for mounting programmes of staff development is on training institutions and the LEA advisory services. Since many of the staff involved may themselves lack knowledge and expertise in the field, a considerable bootstrap operation is likely to be necessary. It is not an impossible task, however, as I have recently tried to show. (Stones 1984b) It seems to me that any resources that are or become available for appraisal would be most appropriately employed on INSET aimed at raising the general level of understanding and competence of teachers.

One other impediment to the growth of systemic developmental action research in teaching, is the lack of knowledge of principles inherent in psychology of human learning as they might relate to practical teaching. In training institutions the parent disciplines normally dominate and until recently pedagogy was never mentioned. Psychology is frequently taught in the same transmission mode as other subjects and text books comprise expositions in the same genre. Students are introduced to the various gurus in the field in lectures or discussions and are expected to 'make the connections' with practical teaching themselves. Ironically, the subject that could be a guide to and illuminator of practical activity, is rarely more than just

one subject on the time-table. Practical teaching is treated as a separate phenomenon and the emphasis is firmly on the subject being taught with subject specialists acting as the main advisers. Any approach to INSET hoping to improve teaching will need to follow the line being taken by some institutions who are trying to break down the barriers between subject 'method', theoretical educational studies and practical teaching. It should also be prepared to take different approaches to research in pedagogy from the current common paradigm of the single shot cross-sectional study I mentioned earlier.

Collegial Appraisal: A case in point

In an attempt to grapple with some of the problems of appraisal and improvement discussed above, I have been involved for a decade or so in work with experienced teachers on INSET and with pre-service teachers in research and development of peer and self appraisal. The aim of the work is to construct a practical and rigorous pedagogy rooted in principles of human learning that offers hope of improving teaching and the supervision of trainee and probationer teachers. Every effort is made to bring together practical teaching and theoretical principles from pedagogy and psychology of learning. Field work is done in a variety of teaching situations and comprises explorations into the teaching of concepts, problem solving, and physical skills together with investigations into maximising motivation. The work covers a wide range of subject fields and age levels and stands the argument for subject specific pedagogy on its head in the belief that there are some basic, generic skills of teaching that are subject independent.

Indeed, I take this heterogeneity of subject specialism to be an important positive feature of the approach. The work on which the explorations were based was a formal master's course in which I acted as course tutor to a group of experienced teachers making a study of supervision. I was also tutor to a group of students taking an initial teacher training course in the humanities. Both groups comprised people from different subject specialisms the unifying factor in both groups being the common field of study, teaching in the case of the student teachers, teaching and supervising in the case of the experienced teachers. We are interested in *teaching* not teaching this that or the other. I do not accept that profound knowledge of a subject is the key to effective pedagogy as current conventional wisdom would have it. The serious denigration of teaching and pedagogy implicit in this view undoubtedly conceives of teaching as no more than telling.

The relevance of this work to our discussion is that one of its crucial elements is an extensive and comprehensive network of self, peer, superordinate, and subordinate appraisal. In contrast to the managerial approach to appraisal, the participants are explicitly concerned with appraising an extensive array of examples of teaching in the light of pedagogical principles. This is possible because of the fact that they have made a study of those principles and their practical application, they thus have a shared discourse with which to discuss the more fundamental aspects of the teaching observed instead of the cosmetic features which they would otherwise be obliged to focus on.

Extensive use is made of video-recordings of teaching, usually made in schools, and with a variety of size of groups. Recordings are of the participants' own teaching and all subjects and age ranges are involved. These recordings are used by individual participants to appraise their own teaching, by the course supervisor to appraise the participants' teaching, and by the participants as a group to appraise the course tutor's counselling of the participants' teaching. The operation is further complicated by the supervisor training element. At this stage the teachers on INSET, work with pre-service teachers, help them in their preparatory work and then counsel them on their teaching. The course tutor and the INSET group later counsel the trainee supervisor on his/her counselling. The course tutor's counselling of the supervisor is also appraised by the group. Throughout all this activity constant reference is made to theoretical principles in the appraisal of the wide variety of teaching involved, with the emphasis always on meaningful learning and transfer, teaching the pupils to solve problems, and making the learning pleasurable to the pupils.

Appraisal is assisted by several pedagogical guides. (Stones 1984a) These resemble superficially the appraisal schedules frequently used in the assessment of teaching practice. They are, however, radically different. They differ in that they are intended as guides or *aides memoires* to the teacher before teaching and they draw on knowledge about different types of learning that have formed the basis for the theoretical work connected with the course. Thus the items on the guides are suggestions to the teacher, not questions for the appraiser or for the scoring of teacher activity. However, they can be used post hoc for ascertaining the extent to which the principles incorporated in the items on the schedules were observed in the teaching. (See appendix for examples of items.)

There is also a guide for the enhancement of supervision, which is somewhat more complex since it is concerned with a more complex operation, namely teaching teachers. All the guides are aimed at improvement and the key element in them concerns the assessment by the teacher of the extent to which learning has taken place. The final item on the supervisors' guide signals an approach to appraisal which I think is important, even if, or perhaps because, it is entirely different from the one that seems intended by most exponents of appraisal. It asks the teacher being counselled if he/she would chose to be counselled again by the same person.

I suggest that this last point introduces a essential element into any discussion of appraisal with improvement as its aim. Unless all involved endorse the idea of self-improvement as part of the general raising of standards it will be understandable if the appraised feel somewhat sceptical about the degree of commitment of the appraisers.

The collegial, pedagogically-based appraisal for improvement that I have described has been particularly interesting for the way in which teachers have been able and prepared to open up their teaching to public critical evaluation. It does not happen at once but it does not take too long. It then becomes possible to work towards group appraisal where, instead of the individual teacher's performance being under scrutiny, the critique is objectified and the group talks about *the teaching* instead of A or B's teaching. This objectification facilitates group learning from the experience of a variety of individuals, not the least, because to a great extent, it removes the threat one is likely to feel when one's own performance is clearly the focus. Since the critique is based on pedagogical principles with which the group is familiar, they are able to work as a group to solve problems and build on strengths. This group experience is an enormously useful learning experience for the participants to help them towards building up their ability for self appraisal, which, after all, is the ultimate aim.

The work I have briefly described was done in a training institution, and I am sure that training institutions could make a valuable contribution to developing courses such as I have described. However, I believe that LEAs could mount INSET activities of a school-based or school-focussed nature using similar approaches. And there is also much to be said for related inter-school activities to obtain the benefits of heterogeneity I mentioned earlier. One

development flowing from the course might be of interest. As a direct consequence of this type of experience a group of teachers set up a group with the aim of improving the teaching of a specific subject. They have been meeting for several years now most of the time paying their own expenses although they were given a small subvention at one stage by the Schools Council. All this time they have been co-operating in empirical study of the pedagogy of music teaching. In the process they have come up with some interesting new insights in this field. It seems to me that this is an activity that holds the seeds for extremely valuable developments in the improving of teaching.

For teachers without the background in pedagogy and learning psychology, there is, of course, the problem I mentioned earlier of providing induction into pedagogical theory that would be essential in collegial appraisal that aspired to transcend cosmetic and managerial concerns. But it is essential to make an effort to break into the circle. It might well be that the structure and organisation of the peer and self appraisal approach described could be implemented in a school or teachers' centre to start with and the pedagogical theory introduced as soon as possible afterwards. The first steps in an approach of this type would need to be taken with delicacy if the operation is to succeed since, without the theory as a neutral and quasi objective point of reference, it is more difficult to remove the feeling of personal threat involved when one's efforts are subjected to group scrutiny.

Collegial Appraisal and Investigative Pedagogy

These matters are far removed from a delivery approach to appraisal. I now wish to take one more step away from surveillance into teacher intellectual independence and pedagogical exploration. I believe the type of activities I have been discussing have the potential for enlarging our understanding of how teaching is now and how it might be. Instead of a system where appraisal is something that is done to teachers, I am advocating one in which teachers appraise *teaching* analytically and experimentally. In the process they will be analysing and evaluating each other's performance, but not for purposes of exclusion, rather for purposes of improving teaching in future. The individual and group efforts will be variations on a theme, each teaching a different subject and/or age of pupil but all making use of a body of general pedagogical and educational principles and reflecting on them to improve specific and concrete teaching. These reflections on the processes and outcomes of the investigations add to the research base developmentally and may be seen as a form of action research. A friend suggested that an appropriate title would be 'iterative replication' and that seems to be a reasonable characterisation.

It is my view that the enhancement of pupil learning depends on a collegial approach to appraisal of teaching that involves teachers actively, that gives them responsibility for professional self development, that encourages them in an exploratory pedagogy, and that focuses firmly on system-wide improvement and not on individual exclusion. Such improvement is, to say the least, highly problematic under a managerial approach. I look forward to future discussions about appraisal giving more consideration to the former points and less to the latter than has been the case prior to this conference.

References

DES (1985) 'Techniques for Appraising Teacher Performance' paper 2 to the Birmingham conference: *Better Schools: Evaluation and Appraisal*

Stones E (1984a) *Psychology of Education: A Pedagogical Approach*, Methuen

Stones E (1984b) *Supervision in Teacher Education: A Counselling and Pedagogical Approach* Methuen

Stones E and Webster H (1984) 'Implications for course design of failure and retrieval rates in initial teacher education' in *Educational Research* 26.3 172-7

Taylor W (1985) 'The Task of the School and the Task of the Teacher' paper 1 to the Birmingham conference: *Better Schools: Evaluation and Appraisal*
P2/app-pap